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**Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, which will address financial provisions**

## Towards the development of the United Nations Forum on Forests plan of action

### Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will consider, at its first substantive session, the following agenda item: "Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forest (IFF) proposals for action, which will address financial provisions" (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000, para. 7 (b) (ii)). The present report has been prepared to support deliberations towards decisions at the first substantive session of UNFF regarding this agenda item.

The plan of action is envisaged to serve as the main instrument of UNFF to strengthen policy implementation, as well as contribute to enhanced coordination, and to foster international cooperation. In addition, it will provide a basis for monitoring and assessing progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The plan of action as a component of the multi-year programme of work of UNFF, is proposed to be a recurrent agenda item at UNFF sessions.

The plan of action would be of fundamental importance in maintaining the political momentum, as well as in mobilizing political, financial and technical support towards the implementation of a set of programmatic components, based on

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the IPF/IFF proposals for action. At the national level, countries will need to identify and set their own priorities, through national forest programmes or other integrated programmes relevant to forests. The UNFF plan of action is envisaged to be complementary to, and supportive of, such national programmes, as well as to identify selective actions at the regional and global levels.

Countries are considered the main actors in implementing the UNFF plan of action, since most IPF/IFF proposals for action are addressed to them. However, countries are supported and facilitated by other actors such as international and regional organizations, institutions, and instruments, including those that are members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), as well as the private sector and other major groups. Therefore, all the main actors, listed above, are expected to contribute to the implementation of the plan of action, inter alia, to secure adequate financial support.

In case the plan of action would not be completed and adopted at the first substantive session of UNFF, this report proposes a two-step approach. First, UNFF at its first substantive session may wish to address and decide on: (a) the programmatic component of the plan of action; (b) approaches for addressing financial provisions; (c) approaches for defining targets and timetables; and (d) approaches to monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The report proposes a set of eight programmatic components, supported by four cross-cutting components and a function for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress. As step two, following the guidance by UNFF at its first substantive sessions, the UNFF secretariat, in close collaboration with CPF, would then develop a detailed plan of action to be presented to UNFF for adoption at its second substantive session in 2002.

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# Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to provide a basis for deliberations and decisions by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), concerning the UNFF plan of action, at its first substantive session to be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 11 to 22 June 2001. This report has been prepared in close consultation with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

2. Valuable inputs for the preparation of this report were provided by the Government-led initiative entitled, "Shaping the programme of work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)",[1] co-sponsored by eight countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Nigeria) and the informal consultations[2] held in February 2001, in conjunction with the UNFF organizational session.

3. During the informal consultations, the participants emphasized that the plan of action would be an instrument of UNFF to facilitate and promote implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action and that new proposals for the plan of action should be avoided. Furthermore, it was recognized that the plan of action would need to specify targets and timetables and address financial provisions.

## A. Mandate

4. This report has been prepared in response to the mandate adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000. In that resolution, the Council decided that at its first session UNFF would, inter alia, develop a plan of action for the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, which would address financial provisions.

## B. Implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action

5. The IPF/IFF proposals for action cover a wide range of complex and often interacting issues to promote and achieve sustainable forest management at the national, regional and global levels. The IPF/IFF proposals for action provide guidance to Governments, international organizations, the private sector and other major groups on how to further develop, implement and coordinate the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The UNFF plan of action would aim to set targets and timetables and address financial provisions, in the context of the implementation of the proposals for action negotiated during IPF and IFF.

6. Not only would the UNFF plan of action be targeted to achieve sustainable forest management per se, but it would also include other crucial overarching objectives such as human well-being, poverty alleviation, economic and social development and environmental protection.

7. The issue of promoting and facilitating the implementation of proposals for action was subjected to analysis and negotiations during IFF process. In the final report of the IFF, a set of factors were recognized as particularly important for implementing of the proposals for action, such as increasing the provisions for financial resources (para. 10 of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles)); promoting integrated approaches through national forest programmes; creating relevant, effective, sustained and reliable donor support, including the special role of official development assistance (ODA); systematic assessment, by all countries, of the IPF/IFF proposals for action; creating and strengthening partnerships to encourage long-term political commitment; and encouraging participation by private sector and other major groups.

**National level**

8. Most of the IPF/IFF proposals for action were addressed mainly to countries. IFF considered national forest programmes, as defined by IPF, to be a viable framework for addressing forest sector issues, including implementation of proposals for action in a holistic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral manner. Furthermore, the plan of action offers an opportunity to provide coordinated support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their efforts to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action that are targeted to countries. Priority actions at the national level would be identified by countries themselves and not by UNFF. Upon request, other actors such as CPF members, international and regional organizations and the private sector could assist countries in implementing their national priorities.

**Regional and global levels**

9. Many IPF/IFF proposals for action were also aimed at the regional and global levels and were directed to international and regional organizations, institutions and forest-related instruments. During the last decade, several forest-related regional processes have proved to be an effective way to promote and facilitate sustainable forest management. It is anticipated that regional involvement in the implementation of the plan of action, would be very valuable, particularly by drawing on the expertise and experience of the various regional processes and arrangements. The plan of action would also be an instrument of UNFF to strengthen implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals that call for action at the global level.

## I. Principal functions of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) relevant to the plan of action

10. The principal functions of UNFF, as identified in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, provide a useful framework for further policy development, policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues and fostering of international cooperation, as well as for monitoring and assessing progress of activities at the national, regional and global levels. As an integral part of the multi-year programme of work of UNFF, the plan of action would be the tool with which to fulfil the following function identified in Council resolution 2000/35: facilitate

and promote the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action as well as other actions that may be agreed upon, including through national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests; catalyse, mobilize and generate financial resources; and mobilize and channel technical and scientific resources to this end, including by taking steps towards the broadening and development of mechanisms and/or further initiatives to enhance international cooperation (para. 2 (a)).

11. The plan of action will also play a significant role as regards:

(a) Enhancing cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as contributing to synergies among them, including coordination among donors (Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (c));

(b) Fostering international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels (Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (d));

(c) Monitoring and assessing progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by regional and international organizations, institutions and instruments, and on that basis considering future actions needed (Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (e)).

# II. The plan of action: an instrument for implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action

## A. Possible programmatic components of the plan of action

12. Progress towards the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests is a long-term process. With a limited time-horizon, such as the initial five years of UNFF, all countries may not make equally substantial achievements in capacity-building, policy development, planning processes and creation of an enabling environment and supporting infrastructure towards sustainable forest management. Accordingly, the UNFF plan of action is seen only as the initial phase in a long-term process.

13. To include all IPF/IFF proposals for action in the plan of action is perhaps neither feasible nor practical considering the short initial time-horizon of UNFF, as well as the limited financial, human, scientific and technical resources available for implementation. However, the UNFF plan of action provides a unique opportunity to focus the attention of the international community on: (a) activities that are strategically important to support the efforts of countries at the national level; and (b) activities that are more appropriate for implementation by countries and other actors at the regional and global levels. To facilitate such tasks, it is proposed to cluster and/or summarize the proposals for action into a manageable number of programmatic components for immediate implementation.[6] It would be desirable to identify programmatic components of the plan of action, on which the international community could focus its attention in the forthcoming years.

14. In the report of the Secretary-General to IFF at its fourth session (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4) on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, the programme elements and proposals for action of IPF/IFF were clustered into 16 elements (box 1). These elements could constitute the basis for identifying possible programmatic components. All these components have national, as well as regional and global applications.

Box 1

**Set of 16 elements based on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, IPF and IFF deliberations on forests**

1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes.
2. Promoting public participation.
3. Combating deforestation and forest degradation.
4. Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK).
5. Forest-related scientific knowledge.
6. Forest health and productivity.
7. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.
8. Economic, social and cultural aspects of forests.
9. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems.
10. Monitoring, assessment and reporting; and concepts, terminology and definitions.
11. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover.
12. Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests.
13. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.
14. Financial resources.
15. International trade and sustainable forest management.
16. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management.

## B. Addressing financial provisions

15. In recent years, the international community has promulgated numerous international plans of action in order to meet diverse challenges. The plans adopted so far include large programmes on a global or regional basis. While these plans are targeted at various actors, many lack a clear statement of appropriate financial

provisions and/or mechanisms to facilitate implementation. Accordingly, many plans have remained largely aspirational in character.

16. UNFF would need to proceed quickly towards the development and implementation of a realistic and effective plan of action in a pragmatic manner. Implementation involves efficient deployment of human and financial resources and strengthening of international cooperation. To achieve an effective plan of action, with appropriate financial provisions, is a major challenge that UNFF at its first substantive session would need to address and about which it would need to give guidance. In this context, it will be crucial to address the relationship between addressing financial provisions of the plan of action and the policy development deliberations on the issues of financial resources for supporting sustainable forest management, which is proposed for UNFF deliberation as a cross-cutting issue in its multi-year programme of work.[7]

17. All countries, both developing and developed, would need, to the extent of their ability, to secure and allocate adequate resources for implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. However, the financing should take into account that countries are at different stages of economic development and that national activities would, as far as possible, be financed from domestic resources. Developing countries, particularly the least developing countries, including many countries with low forest cover, would need special consideration in financial cooperation, to sustainably manage their forests in order to meet their needs for forest products and services and in some cases to expand their forest cover. The provision of increased financial resources, inter alia, through innovative approaches, as well as technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology at the international and national levels, was highlighted in the final report of IFF.[8] It was also stated that such support is particularly needed for capacity-building, and for creating participatory and innovative mechanisms for financing sustainable forest management.

18. The scope of the activities of the UNFF plan of action, their possible sources of funds and the main focus of expected benefits are presented in the table.

**Sources of possible financing for the activities of the UNFF plan of action**

| *Scope of activities* | *Possible sources of funds* | *Provided by* | *Implementing agency* | *Main focus of expected benefits* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| National | Domestic resources | • National budget | • National institutions | Local |
| | | • Major groups | • Non-governmental organizations | National |
| | | • Private sector | • Private | |
| | Bilateral | Donors | National institutions | Local |
| | | | | National |
| | Multilateral | Financial institutions | International organizations | Local |
| | | Donors | United Nations agencies | National |
| Regional | Bilateral | Donors | Regional/international organizations | Regional |
| | Multilateral | Financial institutions | United Nation agencies | Regional |
| Global | Multilateral | Donors | Regional/international organizations | Global |
| | | Financial institutions | United Nations agencies | |

## C. Identifying targets and timetables

19. The establishment of targets and timetables will be crucial for assessing the effectiveness of the UNFF plan of action, as well as for the entire UNFF process, which will be reviewed after the initial mandate of five years. The assessment of progress in implementing the plan of action will be a major component of this overall review. The establishment of targets and timetables provides the criteria against which progress in the implementation of the plan of action can be assessed objectively.

20. Ideally, the UNFF targets would need to be concrete and achievable. The targets should, where possible, be quantitative in nature, in order to easily measure progress. However, in some cases, the targets could be qualitative.

21. In choosing targets, UNFF must look ahead. All targets and timetables should be realistic so that their achievement, within the five-year period, would be feasible. It takes considerable lead time to develop action; however, forward-looking approaches are necessary in order to address present and future needs.

### D. Monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress

22. Regarding monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in the implementation of the plan of action, there is a need for all countries to systematically monitor and assess the implementation and to report on progress to UNFF. In addition, in order to provide a comprehensive assessment, international and regional organizations, including CPF, various regional processes, donors, the private sector and other major groups, should be invited to report on their progress towards the implementation of the plan of action.

23. Furthermore, progress on implementation of the UNFF plan of action could be considered one criterion against which the overall review of the international arrangement on forests would be carried out by UNFF at its fifth session in 2005.[9]

## III. The plan of action: an opportunity for fostering synergies

24. The UNFF plan of action would entail the participation of all main actors and implementing bodies to whom these proposals have been addressed (namely, countries, international organizations, including CPF, regional processes, the private sector and other major groups).

25. As a recurrent item in the UNFF multi-year programme of work, the plan of action would provide an opportunity for: fostering synergies among the main actors; reviewing progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action; identifying gaps and actions needed to address those gaps; and reviewing the work of different actors involved. Since UNFF is a body without any operational mandate, it can only facilitate and promote implementation. The responsibility for implementing the plan of action, including securing adequate financial, technical and human resources, will lie with the countries themselves and other actors.

### A. Envisaged role of countries

26. Countries will play a major role in implementing the plan of action, since most IPF/IFF proposals for action are specifically addressed to them. The national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests would serve as the fundamental instruments for implementation at the national level. These programmes would serve as the policy framework for identifying national priorities, seeking political support and addressing forest-related issues in a holistic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral manner.

27. Countries would need to define clear objectives and criteria to promote and assess effective implementation of sustainable forest management. In addition, the national policy framework would need to be kept under review, in order to continue to embody capabilities for cross-sectoral planning, coordination and implementation, and adequate resource allocation. In particular, IFF agreed that each country should establish a focal point to guide and coordinate the implementation and assessment process of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including the participation of all relevant interested parties.[10]

## B. Envisaged role of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

28. In Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the Council decided to invite executive heads of relevant organizations of the United Nations system and heads of other relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a collaborative partnership on forests to support the work of UNFF and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants, and facilitate and promote coordinated and cooperative action, including joint programming. Accordingly, it is envisaged that all members of CPF will, upon request, play an active role in assisting countries in the implementation of the UNFF plan of action at the national level. They can also assist through their current and future programmes, joint programmes, projects and other activities, such as mobilizing and catalysing actions at the regional and global levels.

29. CPF members would continue, consistent with the practice of IPF and IFF, to take responsibility as "lead agencies", assuming the key responsibility for specific elements of the programme of work of UNFF, including programmatic components of the plan of action. CPF members are also expected to encourage the engagement and involvement of other collaborators with respect to implementing specific actions. Information on the establishment of CPF, its specific tasks and interactions between UNFF and CPF is presented in a note by the Secretariat (E/CN.18/2001/7).

30. The role of CPF members would be subject to decisions by their respective governing bodies. While CPF might welcome the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of specific regional and global activities of the UNFF plan of action, it should be noted that the contributions of CPF members would be determined by the level of their present financial and human resources.

## C. Public-private partnerships

31. It would be desirable to mobilize private sector resources for specific activities in the UNFF plan of action. The role of the private sector in the implementation of the UNFF plan of action could be twofold: first, as an important implementing agent of specific IPF/IFF proposals for action that are specifically addressed to the private sector; and second, as a crucial financing source to complement national and international public funds. However, IFF recognized that private sector investment should not be considered a substitute for international public funding, including ODA.[11] In addition, the IPF/IFF process recognized the important, but differentiated, contributions of the public and private sectors, while stressing the role of Governments in fostering an enabling policy environment. The IPF/IFF also stressed that, in developing countries, the domestic and international public funding related to forests is needed for leveraging private sector funding.

## D. Enhancing coordination among donors

32. The need for improving donor coordination in assisting developing countries in advancing sustainable forest management practices was duly recognized during the IPF/IFF process. The role of donors in supporting the implementation of national, regional and global activities is essential for securing successful implementation of the UNFF plan of action. In order to achieve more favourable

response from the donors, it would be desirable to emphasize the economic, social and environmental benefits, as well as the contribution of sustainable forest management towards poverty alleviation and overall human well-being.

33. Donors could assist in the preparation and implementation of the UNFF plan of action by providing coordinated inputs on specific activities within each programmatic component of the plan of action. Donors could also catalyse and facilitate implementation of regional and global processes. Throughout the implementation of their activities, donors could also prepare coordinated progress reports to UNFF, and operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner.

34. The financial support for individual programmatic components in the UNFF plan of action could be mobilized with the active participation of interested donor countries, through contributions directly to countries, to members of CPF and/or to any other actor or implementing body under the UNFF plan of action. The international donor community could contribute substantively to supporting the implementation of the UNFF plan of action by:

(a) Creating initiatives and partnerships to encourage long-term political commitment for relevant, effective, sustained and reliable donor support;

(b) Focusing donor cooperation and coordination in support of country and regional efforts on agreed programmatic components, targets and timetables of the UNFF plan of action;

(c) Designing innovative strategies to mobilize finance, technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology at the international level;

(d) Facilitating the participation by the private sector and other major groups.

### E. Envisaged role of major groups

35. Participation of major groups, including non-governmental organizations, indigenous people, the private sector, youth, women and other major groups, in implementing the plan of action is essential for securing success in assisting countries in achieving sustainable forest management. Major groups have been recognized as significant contributors during the IPF/IFF process.

36. In the UNFF plan of action, major groups could play a crucial role in assisting and supporting the implementation, coordination and mobilization of international cooperation as well as in facilitating the implementation of the plan of action. Accordingly, their participation at an early stage in the plan of action is desirable, in respect of providing inputs on developing activities and subsequently implementing them, as well as monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress.

## IV. Steps towards the development of the plan of action

37. According to Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, UNFF will, at its first substantive session, develop a plan of action, which will address financial provisions. However, in case the plan of action is not completed at the first

substantive session, with agreed activities, targets, timetables and financial provisions, a two-step approach is proposed below.

## A. Step one: decisions to be adopted at the first substantive session of UNFF

38. The Forum at its first session may wish to decide on the framework within which the plan of action should be developed. In order to accomplish this, UNFF at its first substantive session would need to take decisions on: (a) the programmatic components to be included in the plan of action; (b) approaches for addressing financial provisions; (c) defining targets and timetables; and (d) monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

### 1. Decision on possible programmatic components of the plan of action

39. UNFF may wish to consider the following criteria for selecting possible programmatic components of the plan of action:

- Fundamental for promoting and implementing sustainable forest management;
- Policy is mature and ready for implementation;
- Politically significant and beneficial to human well-being;
- Wide and balanced geographical application; and inclusive of priorities of both forest-rich and forest-poor countries;
- Potential to achieve demonstrable progress, during the initial five-year period of the plan of action.

40. It is proposed that the 16 issues presented in box 1 should be used as the basis for defining the programmatic components of the plan of action. For illustrative purposes, these 16 issues have been merged and clustered, by using the above criteria, into 8 programmatic components; 4 cross-cutting components; and 1 function (box 2).

41. The future development of the plan of action may consist in elaborating the set of activities, targets, timetables and financial provisions for each of its programmatic components. UNFF may wish to request its secretariat to coordinate, with the support and assistance of CPF, the development of the UNFF plan of action. UNFF may wish to decide that the outline described in box 3 be used for the preparation of each programmatic component of the plan of action by the respective lead agency in consultation with other members of CPF and other actors such as countries, international and regional organizations, institutions, instruments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other major groups.

Box 2

**Proposed programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action (based on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, IPF and IFF deliberations on forests)**

**Programmatic components**

1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes.
2. Combating deforestation and forest degradation, including maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.
3. Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK).
4. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.
5. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems.
6. Needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover.
7. Restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests.
8. International trade and sustainable forest management.

**Cross-cutting components***

9. Forest-related scientific knowledge.
10. Promoting public participation.
11. Financial resources.
12. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management.

**Monitoring function***

13. Monitoring, assessment and reporting.

* Issue to be considered in the implementation of all eight programmatic components of the plan of action.

Box 3
**Outline proposed for the table of contents of each programmatic component of the plan of action**

1. Title.
2. Background.
3. Objectives.
4. Activities (national, regional and global).
5. Supporting cross-cutting components.
6. Targets and timetable.
7. Financial provisions.
8. Institutional support and coordination, including main actors responsible for implementation.
9. Monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress.

### 2. Decision on how to address financial provisions

42. It is expected that, at its first session, UNFF will provide guidance on the potential modalities for addressing financial provisions in the plan of action. The issue of financing sustainable development in general has been in the international forest policy agenda since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The IPF and IFF processes have explored this issue, not only through their own deliberations, but also through the workshops held in Pretoria, South Africa,[12] and Croydon, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.[13] UNFF also benefited greatly from its first country-led initiative entitled "International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management", 22-25 January 2001, Oslo, Norway.[14] This workshop explored ways and means to implement IPF/IFF proposals for action related to financing sustainable forest management.

43. In this regard, UNFF may also wish to consider the various modalities being employed by the international community for financing some of the existing action plans and/or modalities that have the potential to support the specific needs of the UNFF plan of action. The descriptions of these modalities (see annex I) by no means constitute an exhaustive list and other innovative financial mechanisms may also be considered. It is proposed that UNFF at its first substantive session should examine the range of potential financing modalities and decide on the appropriate approaches towards addressing financial provisions of the plan of action.

### 3. Decision on targets and timetables

44. It would be desirable for UNFF to provide guidance on specific targets for each of the programmatic components for the next five years.

45. UNFF at its first session may wish to decide on the approaches for targets and timetables for the implementation of each programmatic component of the plan of

action. Proposals for targets and timetables would then be further elaborated for each programmatic component of the plan of action by the respective lead agency of CPF and presented for consideration and adoption by UNFF at its second substantive session.

46. For illustrative purpose only, examples of possible targets from IPF/IFF proposals for action related to national forest programmes and criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management are provided in annex II. Similar types of targets could be developed for all programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action.

47. In the initial time-horizon of the plan of action, the timetables for specific targets may extend from one to four years. Nevertheless, the plan of action is considered a long-term goal, and the proposed framework towards the development and implementation through the year 2005 may be viewed only as phase one in this long-term process.

#### 4. Decision on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress

48. UNFF at its first session may wish to decide on the approaches for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to the UNFF plan of action.

49. Possible options for monitoring and assessing progress in the implementation of the plan of action include: (a) voluntary national reports provided by Governments; and (b) other existing information and reports provided by other implementing bodies, for example, CPF, international and regional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors.

### B. Step two: the adoption of the UNFF plan of action

50. Following the guidance provided in the decisions adopted by UNFF at its first substantive session, the UNFF secretariat, in cooperation with CPF, would then develop a more detailed proposal for each programmatic component of the plan of action, including all the elements proposed in the outline presented in box 3. The developed draft plan of action would be presented to UNFF for adoption. It is also expected that UNFF at its second substantive session would adopt and launch the UNFF plan of action, and convey this information to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, as an example of advancements achieved in the intergovernmental deliberations on forest policy.

51. At sessions subsequent to its second substantive session, UNFF would monitor the overall implementation of the plan of action based on mid-term reports prepared by countries and other implementing bodies. This activity would contribute to the five-year review of the international arrangement on forests at the fifth substantive session of UNFF.

## V. Conclusion

52. In conclusion, at its first substantive session UNFF may wish to decide on the following regarding its plan of action:

(a) Programmatic components;

(b) Approaches for addressing financial provisions;

(c) Approaches for defining targets and timetables;

(d) Approaches to monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in implementation;

(e) Guidance on proposed implementation and/or development of the UNFF plan of action.

*Notes*

[1] See the report of the International Expert Consultation on "Shaping the programme of work for the United Nations Forum on Forests", held in Bonn, Germany, from 27 November to 1 December 2000 (E/CN.18/2001/2). The report was transmitted by the Government of Germany to the organizational session of UNFF in February 2001.

[2] See "Proposed framework towards the development of the UNFF Plan of Action", information note No. 2 for the informal consultations, 13-16 February 2001. This note and other relevant documents from the UNFF secretariat are available on the Internet at : http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[3] See full text of programme element I.A, particularly para. 9, of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex III.

[5] See para. 21 of the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/5) on the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

[6] As an example of how the IPF/IFF proposals for action can be summarized in order to assist countries in measuring progress and establishing priorities for sustainable forest management, see "Summary of proposals for action: the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests produced by the Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, 2000, available on the Internet at: http://www.affa.gov.au/affa/subjects/publications.html. Also, see the *Practitioner's Guide to the Implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action*, produced by the Six-country Initiative in support of IFF, 2nd ed., May 1999, which is available on the Internet at: http://www.gtz.de/twrp/ under the library section. The Six-country Initiative held an International Expert Consultation in Baden-Baden, Germany, 29 June-3 July 1998. The report (E/CN.17/IFF/1998/12) of the consultation (Government-led Initiative in Support of IFF entitled "Putting the IFF proposals for action into practice") was transmitted by the Government of Germany to the second session of IFF.

[7] See sect. III.D entitled "Proposed multi-year programme of work: foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation" of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (E/CN.18/2001/5).

[8] See paras. 9 and 30 of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[9] See sect. III.E of the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/5) on the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Also, CPF plans to provide for the first substantive session of UNFF a concept paper on monitoring, assessment and reporting in UNFF.

[10] See para. 9 (e) and (f) of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[11] Ibid., para. 23.

[12] Workshop on Financial Mechanisms and Sources of Finance for Sustainable Forestry, 4-7 June 1996, Pretoria, South Africa.

[13] Workshop on Financing of Sustainable Forest Management, 11-13 October 1999, Croydon, Unided Kingdom. Final report available on the Internet at: *http://www.undp.org/seed/forest/pages/publications/index.html*.

[14] International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management, 22-25 January 2001, Oslo, Norway. Final report available on the Internet at: *http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/fsfm/index.htm*.

# Annex I

## Potential financing modalities

For illustrative purposes only, modalities that are being employed by the international community to finance some of the existing action plans and/or that have the potential to support the specific needs of the UNFF plan of action are described briefly below.

### Consortium of different sources of funding

Activities in several action plans may be supported through cooperation among a range of various sources of funding (domestic, multilateral, bilateral, private sector, major groups, non-governmental organizations etc.). Under this financing modality, the plan provides a framework and the support to the implementation of specific activities originates from various funding sources. The provision of funds is often accomplished on a case-by-case basis. For example, certain activities are supported entirely by domestic resources, others by bilateral or multilateral international cooperation or by the private sector.

### The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) type of approach

In consultative meetings of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) type, particular donor countries, institutions or organizations would accept specific financial responsibilities for particular activities. This modality comes close to organizing formal pledging meetings, which, except when there is a narrow range of activities, it might be difficult for UNFF to organize. The success of CGIAR may have resulted from the financial "floor" provided by some donor Governments and the supportive role played by the World Bank.

### Establishment of an international fund

The proposal for establishing an international financial mechanism to support sustainable forest management was extensively deliberated during the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) process and is yet to be resolved. In this regard, it was proposed that an international fund for forests be established in order to support, inter alia, the additional costs during the transition period towards sustainable forest management. It was suggested that an international financial mechanism for forests could: (a) involve participating donors and beneficiaries in relevant decision-making; (b) respond to national needs and support national forest programmes; (c) facilitate internalizing externalities of forests in promoting sustainable forest management; (d) build on or link with national financing mechanisms; (e) be transparent and administratively efficient; (f) complement the financing mechanisms of relevant multilateral agreements; and (g) have secure and sustained funding sources. No consensus was reached on an international financial mechanism and strong reservations were voiced regarding the establishment of an international fund for forests.

### Establishment of special trust funds

The establishment of trust funds, based on assessed contributions, has been one workable option for some existing sizeable plans of action. If UNFF was to utilize this kind of option, it might wish to have it targeted on specific programmatic components. Trust funds also offer the possibility of earmarked contributions to support the implementation of specific national, regional and global activities.

# Annex II

## Examples of targets

Examples of possible targets for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) plan of action are described below, for illustrative purposes only.

### National forest programmes

The current situation concerning national forest programmes, according to a survey of 145 countries undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1998-1999,[a] is as follows: 96 per cent of them (that is to say, 139) had national forest programmes in various stages of development but in only 44 per cent of the countries (that is to say, 64) were those programmes in the implementation stage.

Possible quantitative targets to be attained by the year 2005 for UNFF could include the following:[b]

- Development of national forest programmes: an increase from the current 139 countries to 150 countries;
- Implementation of national forest programmes: an increase from the current 64 countries to 100 countries.

Possible qualitative target for UNFF could include the following:

- All new national forest programmes would be developed according to the "guidelines" of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF).[c]

### Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

Targets for UNFF to be attained by the year 2005 could include the following:

- Worldwide coverage of regional criteria and indicators processes;[d]
- National criteria and indicators to be developed in 100 countries;[e]
- Criteria and indicators to be used as a framework for best forest practices;[f]
- Compatibility between national-level criteria and indicators in different regional processes to be increased, also with a view to the possible adoption by UNFF of a common (global) set of criteria and indicators.[g]

*Notes*

[a] FAO, "Status and progress in implementation of national forest programmes: outcome of a survey by FAO" (1999).

[b] The targets are derived from paragraph 17 (a) of the report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its fourth session (New York, 11-21 February 1997) (E/CN.17/1997/12).

[c] Ibid.

[d] Ibid., para. 115 (c).

[e] Ibid., para. 115 (a).

[f] Ibid., para. 115 (b).

[g] Ibid.